

IowaAccess Project 7 Plan

Project Business License Information Center, Regulation Guide, and Professional Licensing

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Mission Statement

Develop an efficient and convenient electronic information system for citizens, businesses, and government to:

- apply for professional and business licenses and operating permits
- obtain project specific regulatory guidelines and agency contracts
- Iselect appropriate business and community economic development project assistance

Needs Statement

It is the responsibility of every state agency that regulates business or professional activity to provide the Iowa Department of Economic Development, (IDED) with the information detailing the regulated activity, required permit or license, application process, contact, fee, and timeline (Code of Iowa Ch. 15E.17). To streamline the process of providing business license and permit application IDED would intake information through a Amaster form@ and electronically transmit to each appropriate state agency for processing and final approval of permits.

Problem Statement

The current Business Licence Information Center, (BLIC) process utilizes an effective cooperative information sharing process in state government. Surveys show that business customers are satisfied with the response time, accuracy of the information provided, and the ability to make decisions with what is received. One recurring displeasure is that the actual license(s) or permit(s) are not provided and the customer must make additional visits or communication with the responsible agency or multiple agencies, which often lack electronic access and processing capabilities.

BLIC must develop a first stop application system that provides:

- convenient, secure, access for citizens, businesses, and government to seek information
- reduced contacts with multiple agencies and repetitive application processes using common data elements
- a centralized repository for state agencies to store, retrieve, and share information
- a method to consolidate and eliminate obsolete and duplicative licenses and application processes

Client Population

There are approximately 78,000 business establishments in Iowa.

There are 99 county governments and 950 municipalities in Iowa.

BLIC currently provides approximately 3500 - 4000 start-up packets per year.

DOC Professional Licensing provides approximately 30,000 licenses per year.

Project Purpose

Every state agency that requires a commercial business to obtain a permit, license, or regulatory approval provides the IDED with the information detailing the regulated activity, required permit, application process, contact, fee, and timeline (Code of Iowa Chi. 15E.17). This information is maintained in a database by IDED and is operated as the Business License Information Center (BLIC). BLIC works with start-up and expanding businesses to identify the requirements necessary for legal business operation in Iowa. BLIC prepares a packet of information for the specific business type which identifies the licenses necessary and the agency contacts to obtain them. The IDED believes state government can improve the efficient and effective delivery of business license, permit, and regulatory agency information for citizens, businesses, and government.

IDED proposes to streamline the process by creating a single Amaster@ license form to begin the application process, identify the licenses necessary for specific business operations, and provide additional business development assistance to reduce start-up timelines. IDED would intake information through the initial master form and electronically transmit to each appropriate agency for the processing and final approval of each individual permit. IDED would coordinate with other executive departments to create and implement the new master license form and system.

Project Parameters

Project Implementation and Management:

- Small Business Resource Office, (SBRO) and the participating agencies will create and implement the new Amaster@ license form and system.
- Small Business Resource Office will seek the input and updates for Business License Information from all participating agencies.
- Small Business Resource Office will be responsible for collecting information from customers and transmitting this information electronically to each

appropriate agency.

The participating agency will be responsible for final approval, collecting fees, and issuing permits, and the renewal process.

- SBRO will perform customer satisfaction surveys and feedback loop for process improvement.

Benefits to Iowans:

- A convenient, effective, and timely system for start-up and expanding businesses to obtain the licenses and permits necessary to conduct business.
- A true first stop center staffed by IDED, with multiple access points including 24 hour telephone messaging, document faxback and Internet capabilities.
- A reduction of paperwork and improved response time by state government.
- Reduced contacts with the multiple agencies currently necessary to identify and obtain the correct legal documentation to establish a business in Iowa.

Project Participation

Project Leader and Service Provider:- Technology Services, Small Business Resource Office, IDED

Participants will be: Department of Revenue and Finance, Department of Inspections and Appeals, Department of Agricultural and Land Stewardship, Department of Workforce Development, Department of Commerce, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation, Department of Public Safety, and Department of Public Health.

Customers: Business Customers

Non-participating organization/agencies that should be kept informed about this project: Chambers of Commerce, SBA, SBDC, SCORE and local economic development agencies.

Project Detail:

Benefits to State Government include:

- Reduction of staff time and information costs associated with the routine, repetitive, attention to non-technical questions.
- A centralized repository for state agencies to store, retrieve, and exchange license information electronically.
- A method to consolidate and eliminate obsolete and duplicative licenses and application processes.
- A method to identify all new business firms and their location.
- Establishing benchmarks for regulatory agency response and performance.
- The development of a model program for state government efficiency and increasing the pro-business reputation of Iowa.

The development of this system does not:

- Remove the authority or staff review of license issuance or renewal.
- Reallocate license fee revenue.